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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for supplying power to at least one load during failure of a main voltage source, wherein batteries serve as an emergency voltage source supply to the at least one load during failure of the main voltage source and are connected to the main voltage source, the method comprising:

splitting the batteries into at least two battery groups, with the batteries of each group being connected in series;

connecting each of the at least two battery groups in parallel to the main voltage source for charging, and

connecting the at least two battery groups in series to the load for use as the emergency voltage source,

wherein splitting the at least two battery groups and connecting the at least two battery groups in parallel to the main voltage source comprises ~~doing so~~ using a single switching device, the single switching device comprising an element that is directly coupleable to each of the at least two battery groups such that the single switching device is configured to both split the batteries into the at least two battery groups and to connect each of the at least two battery groups in parallel, and wherein the at least two battery groups and the load are decoupled from the main voltage source by a diode device with at least one diode arrangement therebetween.

2.-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein connecting the at least two battery groups in series to the load for use as the emergency voltage source comprises doing so by having the single switching device switch over into a state different from a state in which the

batteries groups are split.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, further comprising having the single switching device switch over into the different state automatically upon the failure of the main voltage source.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising limiting a charge voltage on the at least two battery groups using a charge-voltage limiting circuit.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising interrupting further discharging of the at least two battery groups using an exhaustive discharge protective circuit after the at least two battery groups have discharged to a specified value.

26. (Currently Amended) A device for supplying power to at least one load during failure of a main voltage source, the device comprising:

batteries connected so as to be connected in series to deliver power to the at least one load during failure of the main voltage source;

a splitting circuit configured to split the batteries into at least two battery groups, with the batteries of each battery group being connected in series; and

a connection circuit configured to connect each of the at least two battery groups in parallel to the main voltage source,

wherein a single switching device provides both the splitting circuit and the connection circuit, the single switching device comprising an element that is directly couplable to each of the at least two battery groups such that the single switching device is configured to both split the batteries into the at least two battery groups and to connect each of the at least two battery groups in parallel, and wherein a diode device for decoupling is connected between the main voltage source and the at least two battery groups, said diode device comprising at least one diode connected in a connecting line to the main voltage source.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 26, wherein the single switching device is configured to connect the at least two battery groups in parallel for charging and in series for supplying power to the load.

29. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 26, wherein the single switching device comprises at least one relay.

30. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 29, wherein contacts of the relay are arranged in a release state during failure of the main voltage source, such that the at least two battery groups are connected in series to supply power to the load.

31. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, wherein a resistance for charging is assigned to each battery group.

32. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, wherein each battery group comprises the same number of batteries.

33. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, further comprising a charge-voltage limiting circuit connected in parallel with each of the battery groups.

34. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, further comprising an exhaustive discharge protection circuit connected to the battery groups.

35. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, wherein the splitting circuit comprises at least a first transistor configured as an electronic switch.

36. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 35, wherein the battery groups are connected to feeder lines of the main voltage source or the load by second and third transistors.

37. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 36, wherein a constant current source is connected between the second transistor and an associated battery group.

38.-39. (Cancelled)